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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to test the hypothesis that "really communicating" would be identified as a positive experience for communicators, as represented by the use of the positive factor clusters of the Joel Davitz model of affective experience (i.e., moving toward others, enhancement, comfort), and that a greater proportion of females than males would report heightened cognitive-physical-affective functioning when "really communicating." Eighty-six undergraduate students completed a 382-item check-list, representing Davitz's 12 clusters, in response to a passage regarding unsuccessful and successful communicating experiences. The results supported the hypothesis. The clusters the respondents drew upon to convey the experience of "really communicating" were those associated with the factor Davitz termed positive. By contrast, there were not enough items from the negative clusters to warrant inclusion. While there was 85% between-sex agreement as to what items constituted "really communicating," there were 19 significant differences between the sexes, all with females in the higher proportions, distributed across the comfort, moving toward others, activation, and miscellaneous clusters. (A discussion of Davitz's study and the resulting clusters and a copy of the passage to which the subjects responded are included in the text.) (HTH)

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"REALLY COMMUNICATING": THE EXPLICATION OF AN EXPRESSION

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The purpose of this investigation was to contribute to a grounded theory of "communication" as a cultural category in some American speech. The expression "really communicating" was the specific object of focus.

It was hypothesized that "really communicating" would be identified as a positive experience for communicators, as represented by their usage of the POSITIVE factor clusters of the Joel Davitz model of affective experiences. It was also hypothesized that there would be significant response differences between sexes, with greater proportions of females than males reporting heightened cognitive-physical-affective functioning when "really communicating." Both hypotheses were supported by the data. An overview description of "really communicating" is presented, and the sex differences interpreted.

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Recently Katriel and Philipsen set out to develop a grounded theory of "communication" as a cultural category in some American speech.[1] Their ethnographic exploration was aimed at discovering the "localized and highly poignant meanings" that the key term

"communication" has for some of those who use that term to refer to the communicative aspects of their interpersonal relationships.

Interviews with two female informants, diary analysis, and a consideration of the usage of the word "communication" on the Phil Donahue television program and in selected texts led the authors to conclude that "there is evidence of two distinctive clusters of terms referring to communication. One cluster includes such terms of 'real communication,' 'really talking,' 'supportive communication,' and 'open communication.' 'Communication,' without a modifier, can also be included in this cluster when the term appears in the context of discussing 'self' and 'relationships.' The other cluster includes such terms as 'small talk,' 'normal chit-chat,' and 'mere talk.' It is probably the case that neither cluster is exhaustively delineated here, but the present assignment of terms is defensible in the light of our field materials."[2]

The present project is a futher effort to search the linguistic representation of the communication experiences of communicators; however, rather than seeking "a glimpse into an American definition of 'communication,'" as was the broader purpose of Katriel and Philipsen,[3] the more circumscribed objective of this endeavor is to explicate a single verbal expression properly belonging to the first cluster of terms referring to communication identified by Katriel and Philipsen. The specific verbal indicator under focus here is the colloquial

expression "really communicating," as in "finally, we were really communicating."

Although Katriel and Philipsen do not specifically cite the expression "really communicating" as being observed within their two-person sample or their other materials, they do cite the expressions "really talking" and "real communication," which would seem to be closely allied variants of the present term of interest. In the verbal communities of which this author has been an inhabitant, "really communicating" (or its past tense form) appears to be the derivative version of the key term "communication" used most commonly in relationship discourse by lay communicators (this in spite of the fact that the expression is internally redundant and admittedly inelegant). When the expression "we were really communicating" comes forth, there seems to be a totality of meaning attendant to the utterance that goes beyond reference to a mere neutral exchange of cognitive information. Accompanying paralinguistic cues tend to suggest rich meaning behind the phrase. It is our task to probe these implied dimensions, while being especially attentive to female-male differences underlying the experience of "really communicating" with another person. The intention is to contribute to a grounded theory of "communication" as a cultural speech category.

In order to allow respondents in this study to describe with some precision the experience of "really communicating," and to do so from a provided vocabulary that would allow for a

determination of degree of interpersonal consensus, a descriptive framework developed by Joel Davitz was selected as appropriate.[4] The potential richness of language, spanning a considerable range of cognitive-physical-affective phenomena, is made available to respondents in an efficient manner through this relatively comprehensive instrument.

The methodological perspective adopted here might be viewed as a kind of "social phenomenology," a search for the commonalities among individuals' reports of personal experiencing.[5] Although the method is not ethnographic, and does involve an imposed structure and quantification, response depth will be sacrificed in this case for the sake of statistical hypothesis testing and generalizability. The findings will presumably complement more qualitative excursions into related regions.

Descriptive Framework

While concluding a project on the nonverbal communication of emotional states,[6] Davitz became interested in surveying the meanings that affective states have for the persons undergoing them. Exactly what do people mean when they say they are "inspired," or "frustrated," or "determined," or "bored," or "serene," or "resentful," or "happy"? What goes on within the organism during each of these and other states, at cognitive-physical-affective levels? Providing at least approximate answers to these questions became the object of Davitz's next major research project.[7]

From over 1200 subjects Davitz collected detailed open-ended descriptions of cognitive-physical-affective functioning during different situations having an emotional component. The obtained pool of thousands of descriptive statements was reduced to a check-list of 556 statements that could be of use in obtaining information about cognitive-physical-affective functioning during a variety of states of human feeling.[8] Fifty subjects, equally representing both sexes and all college graduates, were asked to think of a time when they had experienced a given affective state (e.g., "confidence," "fear," "jealousy," "gratitude") and then to check those items from the check-list that described an aspect of their cognitive-physical-affective behavior during that particular state. Each subject repeated this procedure for a total of 50 affective states over a ten-day to eight-week period.

These data were used to compile a "dictionary of emotional meaning," a compendium of the verbal descriptions of the cognitive-physical-affective phenomena characterizing fifty major affective states.[9] Davitz included only those items within each "definition" that were checked by over one-third (34% or more) of his subjects. This percentage was arbitrarily chosen, but was thought to represent a minimum satisfactory level of commonality of meaning (across subjects) warranting item inclusion.

Davitz had a separate sample of 20 judges rate the adequacy of the descriptions of each of the 50 affective states

he had surveyed, and found that approximately 80% of the entries derived from the check-list procedure were judged to be "comprehensive and adequate" (with another 18% of the remaining entries receiving ratings of "fairly comprehensive and adequate").[10]

A cluster analysis of the data obtained from the 50 subjects across the 50 affective states resulted in the identification of twelve clusters of items that tended to co-occur across affective states. To examine the patterning of clusters across affective states a principal components analysis of derived cluster scores was performed. On the basis of these analyses, Davitz presents a model suggesting that affective experiences are likely to affect persons on these major dimensions: Relatedness (Moving Toward Others, or Away, or Against); Competence (Enhancement, or Dissatisfaction, or Inadequacy); Activation (Activation, or Hypoactivation, or Hyperactivation); and Hedonic Tone (Comfort, or Discomfort, or Tension). An emotional experience designated as POSITIVE in the Davitz model is characterized by some combination of Moving Toward, Enhancement, Activation and Comfort (e.g., "love," "happiness," "contentment"). A NEGATIVE emotional experience could be one of two types: Moving Away, Dissatisfaction, Hypoactivation and Discomfort (as in "boredom," "apathy" and "depression"); or Moving Against, Inadequacy, Hyperactivation and Tension (as in "anger," "hate," and "contempt").[11]

These dimensions and their twelve clusters seem relevant to an attempt to more fully understand the cognitive-physical-

affective aspects of what communicators mean when they say they have participated in the process of "really communicating" with another person. The assumption behind selecting this particular instrument is that "really communicating" stimulates identifiable cognitive-physical-affective responses within communicators. This assumption seems tenable. Communicators selecting this phrase to semantically represent their experience tend to nonverbally imply that they have indeed been impacted at cognitive-physical-affective levels by the communication encounter to which they are referring. The assumption also seems reasonable in view of the identification by Katriel and Philipsen of three distinctive features of cluster-one communication: (1) emotional closeness (rather than distance); (2) supportiveness (instead of neutrality); and, (3) flexibility (versus rigidity). The authors then note that "This is intimate speech, speech which penetrates psychological boundaries and barriers. 'Mere talk,' by contrast, is talk in and through which one 'keeps his distance' or 'stays at arm's length' from another."[12] The speech of cluster-one, then, is that which is especially likely to trigger cognitive-physical-affective activity of the sort measurable by the Davitz instrument.

While most excursions into the conceptual terrain of "communication" have been solo journeys made by communication scholars,[13] the approach here will be to survey, via a suitable descriptive framework, the commonalities among the experiences

of lay communicators for whom the expression "really communicating" has apparent meaning.

Hypotheses

1. *"Really communicating" will be identified as a positive experience for communicators, as represented by their usage of the POSITIVE factor clusters of the Davitz model: Moving Toward, Enhancement, Comfort, and Activation.*
2. *There will be significant response differences between the sexes, with greater proportions of females than males reporting heightened cognitive-physical-affective functioning when "really communicating."*

The first hypothesis is consistent with informal observation, and with the portrayal of such terms as "real communication" and "open communication" by Katriel and Philipsen.

The second hypothesis, predicting sex to be an influential variable in cognitive-physical-affective functioning during "really communicating," is reasonable when one considers the previous research on interactional differences between females and males.[14] Through instrumental and classical conditioning, and modeling processes, females are typically raised to be more aware of and dependent upon social relationships than are males.[15] Females have also traditionally behaved in social roles that call for the development of effective interpersonal skills in the socio-emotional realm of human interaction. As Stein and Bailey

have noted in their review of female achievement motivation literature, "One of the most important areas for female achievement is social skill . . . it appears that attainment of excellence is often a goal of females' achievement efforts, but the areas in which such attainment is sought are frequently social skills and other areas perceived as feminine."[16]

For example, females are seen as having relationships that are more personalized and synchronized than are males' relationships.[17] Females tend to be more self-disclosing[18] and emotionally expressive than males.[19] Females also tend to make greater use of eye contact than males,[20] are more likely to smile,[21] are more touch-oriented with same-sex persons,[22] and stand closer to same-sex dyad partners than males.[23] Females tend to be less verbally aggressive,[24] more likely to listen,[25] and less likely to interrupt than males.[26] Females have been found to be somewhat more empathic,[27] more nurturance-oriented,[28] and more accurate at decoding and encoding emotional states.[29] Females are more likely to claim "love" for same-sex friends,[30] and display more positive feelings about social interaction than males.[31] In a managerial context, females have been perceived as more receptive to subordinates' ideas than males, more encouraging of effort, more attentive and concerned, and more likely to stress happy interpersonal relationships.[32]

Since females tend to engage in intimacy-oriented behaviors to a greater extent than males, and place greater stress on personalized and happy interpersonal relationships than do

males, it is plausible to anticipate that a greater proportion of females will report heightened experiences during "really communicating" with another person than will be the case for males. These differences would be expected to manifest themselves within Davitz's Moving Toward cluster, and possibly on items within the Comfort, Enhancement, and Activation clusters as well, and from the Miscellaneous category.

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects were 86 undergraduate students enrolled in four sections of a course in principles of speech communication at a major southwestern university in the spring of 1982. Over 85% of the respondents were lower-division students, most taking the course as a requirement for graduation with a degree in business. Over 90% were Caucasian. Academically, all of the subjects were within the upper 25% of their high school graduating classes. Females comprised 58% of the sample, and males 42%.

Procedure

During the first week of classes, all subjects were read the following statement (underlines highlighting points of vocalic emphasis):

> Communication is not always easy. For many of us it sometimes seems that it's just not going our way when it comes to communicating with another person. At

times, no matter how hard we seem to try, we don't get through to a particular person, and they don't get through to us. When this happens, we might chalk it up as one of those days, or one of those relationships, or one of those things, or whatever. But all we know for sure is that communication didn't seem to happen, at least not past a certain point. We ran into some kind of a barrier. We walk away feeling frustrated that our communication just didn't go right.

We also find ourselves in other communication experiences where everyone sort of seems to get through to one another, where there seems to be an average level of understanding, with things going along about normally. These are most likely our everyday, run-of-the-mill communication encounters.

Then there are yet other communication experiences most all of us have now and again where things go incredibly well--we have the clear feeling that we are truly and sincerely listening to the other person or persons and they to us. At such times there seems to be a lot of understanding going on, a two-way sense of "Yes, I know exactly what you mean!" We are getting through to one another. There is a mutual grasping of feelings, of thoughts, of experiences, of points of view. We walk away from such an

> interaction sensing that we have really communicated with the other person, that we were "really communicating." It is this latter experience that we're going to focus on here.
>
> The present question is this: exactly what feelings and sensations within you are triggered by this experience of really communicating with another person?

Each respondent also had a duplicate copy of this statement at his or her desk.

The respondents were then asked to complete a 382 item check-list, revised by Davitz on the basis of item analysis of the original longer form.[33] These items represent the twelve clusters already mentioned, plus a large number of miscellaneous Davitz items not fitting within any single cluster. These are included for their exploratory potential. Subjects completed this check-list in an average of 35 minutes.

Data Analysis

Percentages of females and males using each of the Davitz items in their descriptions of "really communicating" were computed separately. Where 34% or more of the members of one or both sexes included an item within their descriptions, a "normal test" of the difference between proportions for independent groups was conducted.[34] This resulted in 97 such tests of significance. The other statistical test employed was chi square

goodness-of-fit, as indicated in the results section.[35]

RESULTS

The Clusters of "Really Communicating"

In order for a given item to be included within the consensus overview of "really communicating" presented in Table 1, over one-third (34%+) of both females and males had to include that item in their check-list responses. This follows the convention of Davitz for establishing a minimum acceptable level of item inclusion. Percentages of females and males, respectively, using each descriptive statement are contained in parentheses following each item in Table 1.

[TABLE 1 GOES ABOUT HERE]

The clusters that respondents have drawn upon to convey the experience of "really communicating" are those associated with the factor Davitz has termed POSITIVE (i.e., Moving Toward, Enhancement, Activation and Comfort). Subjects selected 90% of the items from the Enhancement cluster to semantically represent their experience, 80% of the Moving Toward items, 70% of the Comfort items, and 70% of the Activation items. By contrast, for 7 of the 8 NEGATIVE clusters, there were no items within those clusters even approaching the criterion level for inclusion (by either sex). Comparing the observed distribution across the POSITIVE and NEGATIVE (types 1 and 2) factors with

the theoretical distribution, a x^2 goodness-of-fit test yields a highly significant difference (x^2=68.13, df=2, p<.001). We would not expect the obtained distribution on the basis of chance alone; "really communicating" appears to be a decidedly POSITIVE affective experience, thus supporting the first hypothesis.

The one seeming exception is that subjects also used four of six items from the Hyperactivation cluster to depict an aspect of their functioning while "really communicating." In Davitz's model, Hyperactivation is identified as a cluster within the NEGATIVE factor.[36] An examination of the specific items involved suggests a more relativistic interpretation. This will be offered in the discussion section.

Agreement. It is worth noting that, relatively speaking, there is high agreement within and between sexes on the dimensions of "really communicating." Davitz, it will be remembered, had 50 subjects describe 50 major affective states using an earlier long-form version (556 items) of the inventory used here. The median number of descriptive items per affective state was 36 (using the 34% criterion level),[37] while 63 items were used to characterize the concept of "really communicating." Across all 50 affective states, Davitz's subjects agreed at least 50% of the time on a mean of only 11 items per affective state, with a median of 8.5, versus 30 such items here, or 48% of the total items used by subjects to describe their experiencing. When this latter proportion is matched against

comparable proportions of agreement for Davitz's subjects, one discovers that there was higher agreement in the present study on the dimensions of "really communicating" than Davitz's subjects reached 98% of the time in portraying emotional states.[38] For group data of this sort, then, the composite picture of "really communicating" is relatively unified.

Sex Differences

Across the five clusters used by respondents, there was 85% between-sex agreement as to what items to include and exclude at the 34% criterion level (and 100% agreement on the other seven clusters not used). Yet in spite of these similarities in patterns of response, there were 19 significant differences between the sexes, all with females in the higher proportion, distributed across the clusters as follows: six significant differences from the Comfort cluster, four from Moving Toward, three from Activation, and six from the Miscellaneous category. Six of these 19 significant differences occurred on items that 34% or more of the respondents from both sexes had included within their descriptions of "really communicating" (Table 1), and the other 13 differences had females using an item above the pre-set criterion level and males not. The obtained number of significant differences exceeds that expected on the basis of chance alone (19 such differences out of a total of 97 significance tests for differences between independent proportions). All of the significant female-male

differences are presented in Table 2 (including the six already subsumed in Table 1).

[TABLE 2 GOES ABOUT HERE]

Even when proportion differences were not statistically significant in and of themselves, they rather consistently entailed females in the higher proportion. Of all the nonsignificant differences within the Comfort and Moving Toward clusters, females exceeded males on 95% of these items (by about 12 percentage points per item), a proportion that would not be expected on the basis of chance alone (18 of 19 items, $z=3.90$, $p<.001$). For the Miscellaneous items, 84% were higher for women (16 of 19, $z=2.98$, $p<.01$). As for the other 17 nonsignificant Miscellaneous items where one sex reached the criterion level but the other did not, all of these greater proportions were for females. While none of these differences makes a difference in isolation, a significant pattern is discernable that is consistent with the data of Table 2.

Hypothesis two appears to be confirmed by the data: gender seems to be a key variable in the reporting of experiences of "really communicating." Males are less responsive than females in their reporting on the Comfort, Moving Toward and Activation clusters, and on certain Miscellaneous items.

DISCUSSION

In this section we will discuss the respondents' use of the Hyperactivation cluster, attempt to account for the sex differences presented in Table 2, and overview in truncated form the notion of "really communicating" as portrayed by the data.

Hyperactivation Interpretation

While Hyperactivation is an apparent accompaniment to many negative emotional states, this would not seem to prohibit Hyperactivation from appearing in other emotional experiences that are not in themselves negative (this is perhaps especially the case when both Activation and Hyperactivation are present). In the context of an emotion like "anger," for example, a "quickened pulse and heartbeat," the "rushing of blood through the body," a "speeding-up of the body," and a "sense of being excited and supercharged" would likely be labelled as negative-state occurences. In the context of a positive emotional state, however, these same bodily events would be conceived differently. From Davitz's own research, for example, we find that Hyperactivation plays no less a role in the emotional state of "awe" than does Activation, yet "awe" is not interpreted as a negative emotional state.[39] The same is true for the state of "excitement." And we also find in Davitz's data that Hyperactivation has a substantially more prominent influence than Activation in "surprise," and an even greater role in "passion,"

neither of which his subjects considered to be negatively-valanced emotional states.

It does not seem unwarranted to assume that the valuation placed on Hyperactivation in an emotional experience is dependent upon the context of the experience itself. In short, the use of the Hyperactivation cluster should not be interpreted as suggesting that "really communicating" is anything other than a positive process for respondents.

Sex Differences: A Matter of Control?

Previous research indicates that part of the stereotypical male-role is to be seen as stoic, unsentimental, task-oriented, independent, competitive, aggressive, self-disciplined and analytic. Females, by contrast, have been encouraged to be less aggressive, less competitive, more affilliative, subjective, inner-oriented, receptive, empathic, supportive and nurturing.[40] Communication research indicates that these role prescriptions do in fact exert measurable influences on male-female social style differences.[41] The present data are consistent with this previous research.

Is there any single construct that can be used to tie together the social style differences between males and females? If there is, it might be said to revolve around the issue of control. Males, as a group, tend to have a social style that reflects greater control than females -- control of self, and concern for control of interpersonal relationships.[42] If the

data in Table 2 are viewed in light of this control construct, many of the differences there can be more coherently organized and explained. We might also consider differences in male-female semantic encoding styles.

For example, four of the six significant differences within the Comfort cluster seem to relate to a releasing of physical, structural control: "smiling" (two items), "easier breathing and thinking," and "more graceful and coordinated movement." These would seem to follow from a lessening of control, becoming less rigid, easing off, letting go. Fewer males appear willing (or able) to do this than females. Even the item on "renewed appreciation of life" can, to an extent, be viewed in this manner. As for the item "thinking about beautiful things," it could be encoded in a semantic style not consistent with the male sex-role image.

The Moving Toward differences between the sexes have to do with "trust and appreciation," "confidence with another," "empathic harmony and communion," and "softness," all of which could be seen as relating to control of self-other boundary. It could perhaps be said that more females are willing to relax the boundary between self and other than are males; that males control more carefully how far they allow themselves to be receptive to the realm of the other. Males are less permeable, more vigilant, guarding the gate to intimacy.

One of the three Activation differences involves the experience of "feeling all the way." To "feel all the way" implies

surrender, a giving-in to whatever affectively comes, and it may be that males are not willing to relinquish control to that extent, to risk loss of emotional self-control. And the semantic encoding of the two Activation items concerning sensations of being "bubbly and "buoyant" are quite possibly inappropriate to the masculine self-image.

The Miscellaneous item differences concern "laughing," increased awareness of inner processes, and decreased "awareness of time." These too can be fit within the control construct, as they imply going beyond a rational, linear mind-set and abandoning oneself to more of the sensory gratification contained within the immediate moment. The one item showing females as more aware of "looking good" also seems reflective of male-female socialization differences.

Sex role-differences in social style (especially maintainence of self-control and relationship control), along with differences in semantic-encoding style, appear to be reflected in the ways that females and males differentially report their experiences of "really communicating." As others have noted, the effects of socially-defined sex-role training are considerable, and amply display themselves within our communication encounters. The present data are consistent with these previous research observations.

These findings regarding the differences between the sexes, however, should perhaps be tempered by a reminder that even where significant differences were found, there were still

substantial proportions of males indicating that for them that particular item did in fact capture an aspect of their experiencing. For example, even though females were more likely to report "a sense of trust and appreciation" of the other person when "really communicating," 56% of the male respondents also claimed that description as appropriate. The same could be said of the "empathic harmony" item (also from the Moving Toward cluster), where 42% of the males acknowledged feelings of communion with the other, or of the ". . . I'm feeling all the way" item (Activation cluster), where 36% of the males responded affirmatively. And an examination of the Miscellaneous category yields such findings as 50% of the males reporting that "there is something complete within me," and 42% reporting that "I want to give thanks to God."

The conclusion that the variable of sex exerts a measurable influence on descriptions of the experience of "really communicating" need not obscure the simultaneous observation that males as well as females are impacted by this experience, cognitively, physically, and affectively. As Eakins and Eakins note, ". . . common sense would lead us to expect that abilities and traits, along with their 'opposites', would be distributed among both sexes."[43]

Overview: The Concept of "Really Communicating"

Subjects were able to reach relatively high convergence in describing the dimensions of "really communicating." The

phenomenon appears to be a POSITIVE affective experience (in the Davitz model), characterized by Enhancement, Moving Toward, Comfort, Activation, and Hyperactivation.[44]

If the criterion level is raised to 50% or greater for both sexes to possibly make the depiction from Table 1 even more generalizable, then the featured concurrences of "really communicating," in summary, would seem to be these:

Enhancement: "I have a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment, importance and worthwhileness --- I am functioning as a unit and at an intellectually higher level, and I feel taller and stronger and bigger, energetic and strong inside, and also I am especially able to understand things."

Comfort: "I am optimistic and cheerful, the world is good and beautiful, men are kind, life is worth living, the future is bright -- I feel I can be 'myself,' there's a sense of well-being, of being safe and secure, there's an inner warm glow, I feel like smiling; I am free of conflict, in harmony and at ease with myself, my mind and body are united."

Moving Toward: "I am confident in being with the other, I feel trusting and appreciative; I'm wanting to make the other feel happy, and I'm feeling wanted and needed."

Activation: "My senses are completely open, I seem to sense everything immediately, completely, fully, with no separation between me and the outside world; I feel a warm, calm excitement, an extra spurt or lift or drive in everthing I do or say, more alert and alive, and an intense awareness of every-

thing, greater clarity through my senses."

Hyperactivation: "I am keyed-up, supercharged."

Miscellaneous: "I am more aware of what's going on inside me -- it's simple, pure feeling -- I want others to feel the same as I do; there is something complete within me, and I feel more tolerant, accepting, and understanding of others -- it's more an 'inner' than an outer feeling, a very pleasant feeling."

This, then, is a peek at communicators' experiences of "really communicating." On the basis of what we see here, we might speculate that in terms of Osgood's model,[45] respondents would rate this concept as "good," "potent" and "active." The involvement is one that appears to stimulate and satisfy communicators at cognitive-physical-affective levels. This quality of interhuman connection seems to be conducive to people feeling closer, uplifted, more alive and complete.

Indeed, the longer one ruminates upon the rich descriptive data of Table 1, the more it seems that our conventional definitions of our central term leave out much, especially in the interpersonal context. This is not a fault of our conceptualizing, but possibly a result of our angle of approach. To extend Percy Bridgman's cake metaphor, our conceptions have typically listed the ingredients in the cake, or the operations performed in baking the cake, rather than focusing on the experience of eating the cake.

It may be that some of us are so close to our subject matter that we at times lose perspective, and fall short of capturing our central term's richness in our conceptual summaries. There is a refreshing innocence, and an encompassing quality, to the glimpse of "really communicating" emerging from the data presented here (data obtained from business majors at that). There is a poetic quality to the composite image they have offered; another reminder, to those of us who have chosen this discipline, of the fullness of the gem we seek to understand.

As Katriel and Philipsen have concluded, after pursuing their informants' meanings for the key term of their study, "'Communication' is the solution to the problem of 'relationship' (love) and of 'self' (personhood). In terms of overcoming personal differences, 'communication' functions as the 'how-of-love,' the primary vehicle and constituent of a 'relationship'; in terms of constructing and validating a 'self', 'communication' is the 'how of self.'"[46]

It is the author's hope that reflection upon the description gathered in Table 1 will enhance our understanding of the cultural expression "really communicating," and illuminate some of the personally meaningful referents to which that expressor points.

Table 1

Dimensions of "Really Communicating"

(Female-Male Percentages, Total N=86)

CLUSTERS:

Enhancement

there is a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment (72/75%); I'm really functioning as a unit (62/77%); a sense of being important and worthwhile (72/56%); I feel strong inside (68/67%), taller, stronger, bigger (62/61%), a sense of being exceptionally strong or energetic (60/53%); I seem to be functioning intellectually at a higher level -- able to think clearly, understand everything (60/53%); I have a sense of sureness that I can do anything, that no obstacle is too great for me (48/56%), there are moments of tremendous strength (56/39%).

Moving Toward

a sense of confidence in being with another person (92/61%)[a]; a sense of trust and appreciation of another person (82/56%)[b]; I want to make others happy (76/64%); there's a sense of being wanted, needed (62/53%); a sense of empathic harmony with another person -- a total concentration on another person, a complete understanding, a communion, a unity, a closeness (68/42%)[c]; there'a a desire to give of myself to another person (64/44%); I want to be tender and gentle (54/47%); I want to

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Significant female-male proportion differences, two-tailed tests:

[a] $Z=3.48$. $p<.001$ [b] $Z=2.63$, $p<.01$ [c] $Z=2.40$, $p<.05$

touch, hold, be close physically to the other person (58/39%); I want to feel with the other person, experience with the other person with every sense, to be psychologically in touch (52/36%); I want to help, protect, please, do something for the other person (50/39%); I want to communicate freely, share my thoughts and feelings with everyone around (36/39%).

Comfort

I'm optimistic and cheerful, the world seems basically good and beautiful, men are essentially kind -- life is worth living, the future seems bright (76/75%); I feel I can really be myself (76/61%); a sense of well-being (70/61%); I feel safe and secure (72/58%); there is an inner warm glow, a radiant sensation, a feeling of warmth all over (66/61%); I am free of conflict, in harmony and at ease with myself, my mind and body seem totally unified (64/61%); I feel like smiling (74/50%)[a]; there's a renewed appreciation of life (66/39%)[b]; a sense of "rightness" with myself and the world, everything is going right for me, nothing can go wrong (60/44%); there is a general release, a lessening of tension, I'm loose and relaxed (60/42%); I'm peaceful, tranquil, in tune with the world (52/36%); a sense of harmony and peace within (48/47%); nothing is a burden, problems fade away and I'm free from worry (42/42%); there's a mellow comfort (38/36%).

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[a] $z=2.29$, $p<.05$ [b] $z=2.48$, $p<.05$

Activation

all my senses seem completely open -- I seem to sense everything immediately, completely, fully, with no separation between me and the outside world (74/86%); I feel excited in a calm way, a warm excitement (72/72%); there's a sense of vitality, an extra spurt of energy or drive, a special lift in everything I do and say, I feel bouncy, springy (74/67%); I feel wide awake, more alert, more alive (64/72%); there's an intense awareness of everything -- I seem to experience things with greater clarity, colors seem brighter, sounds clearer, movements more vivid (66/53%); a sense that I'm experiencing everything fully, completely, thoroughly -- that I'm feeling all the way (66/36%)[a]; a strong sense of interest and involvement in things around me (46/44%).

Hyperactivation

there's an excitement, a sense of being keyed up, overstimulated, supercharged (68/61%); my pulse and heartbeat quicken (52/42%); my blood pressure goes up, blood seems to rush through my body (36/44%); my body seems to speed up (36/39%).

MISCELLANEOUS

I'm more aware of what's going on inside of me (72/58%); it's simple, pure feeling (64/56%); I want others (or the other person) to feel the same as I do (60/61%); there is something complete within me (68/50%); I feel more tolerant, accepting,

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[a] $z=2.75$, $p<.01$

understanding of others (66/50%); it's more an "inner" than an "outer" feeling, a very pleasant feeling (52/50%); I feel outgoing, I want to reach out to everyone I meet (60/44%); I want to give thanks to God (62/42%); there is a sense of nostalgia as old memories crop up and I think of the past (52/47%); I have a sense of being free, uninhibited, open, no longer blocked -- I feel uninhibited and spontaneous, anything goes (54/44%); I want to be with friends (54/44%); I keep thinking how lucky I am (58/39%); sense of belonging with another person, a belonging from which other people are excluded (50/47%); I seem to nurture the feeling within myself, I want the feeling to continue, to keep going (54/42%); I keep thinking about what happened over and over again (42/44%); there is a heightened self awareness (46/36%); a sense of belonging with others (44/36%); the feeling fills me completely (34/42%).

Table 2

Gender Differences on Dimensions of "Really Communicating"

(Total N=86)

CLUSTER	FEMALES	MALES	'z' VALUE	PROBABILITY LEVEL (TWO-TAILED)
COMFORT:				
I think about beautiful things	46%	6%	4.24	p<.001
a sense of smiling at myself	64%	33%	3.23	p<.01
there's a renewed appreciation of life	66%	39%	2.48	p<.05
I feel like smiling	74%	50%	2.29	p<.05
everything--breathing, moving, thinking--seems easier	52%	28%	2.23	p<.05
my movements are especially graceful and easy, I feel especially well-coordinated	46%	25%	1.99	p<.05
MOVING TOWARD				
a sense of confidence in being with another person	92%	61%	3.48	p<.001
a sense of trust and appreciation of another person	82%	56%	2.63	p<.01
a sense of empathic harmony with another person--a total concentration on another person, a complete understanding, a communion, a unity, a closeness	68%	42%	2.40	p<.05
I feel soft and firm	42%	19%	2.25	p<.05

CLUSTER	FEMALES	MALES	'z' VALUE	PROBABILITY LEVEL (TWO-TAILED)
ACTIVATION				
a sense I'm experiencing everything fully, completely, thoroughly; that I'm feeling all the way	66%	36%	2.75	p<.01
a sense of lightness, buoyancy and upsurge of the body, an inner buoyancy	56%	31%	2.30	p<.05
I feel effervescent, bubbly	56%	31%	2.30	p<.05
MISCELLANEOUS				
I feel like laughing	50%	22%	2.64	p<.01
the feeling flows from the inside outwards	54%	31%	2.12	p<.05
I feel as if I look especially good	48%	25%	2.16	p<.05
warmth in the pit of my stomach	34%	11%	2.45	p<.05
I breathe more deeply	38%	17%	2.11	p<.05
I'm less aware of time	48%	28%	2.46	p<.05

Footnotes

1. Tamar Katriel and Gerry Philipsen, "'What We Need Is Communication': 'Communication' As a Cultural Category in Some American Speech," Communication Monographs, 48(1981), pp. 301-317.
2. Katriel and Philipsen, pp. 307-308.
3. Katriel and Philipsen, pp. 301-302.
4. Joel R. Davitz, The Language of Emotion (New York: Academic Press, 1969).
5. Davitz, p. 136.
6. Joel R. Davitz, ed., The Communication of Emotional Meaning (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).
7. Davitz, The Language of Emotion. All subsequent Davitz references will be to this work.
8. Davitz, Chapter 1. Later, Davitz developed a shorter (382 item) form of this instrument, and it was this revised version that was used in the present investigation, as noted in the Procedures section.
9. Davitz, Chapter 2.
10. Davitz, pp. 85-87.
11. Davitz, Chapters 4 and 5.
12. Katriel and Philipsen, pp. 307-309.
13. Frank E. X. Dance and Carl E. Larson, The Functions of Human Communication: A Theoretical Approach (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), Appendix A. Also see

Frank E. X. Dance, "The 'Concept' of Communication," Journal of Communication, 20(1970), p. 210, where Dance concludes that "a variety of approaches and methodologies is often beneficial when dealing with a concept as complex as communication and we should beware of seeking or, worse, of finding a single, rigid, exclusive definition." Dance goes on to note that "What may help is the creation of a family of concepts. . . we can spread the work through a family of communication concepts. . . The identification of the familial members is a task still to be completed." Dance borrows the familial notion from Kaplan, who suggests that "The meaning of a term is a family affair among its various senses." Abraham Kaplan, The Conduct of Inquiry. (San Francisco: Chandler, 1964), p. 50, as quoted in Dance, p. 202.

14. See Barbara Westbrook Eakins and R. Gene Eakins, Sex Differences in Human Communication (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1978); Nancy M. Henley, Body Politics: Power, Sex, and Non-verbal communication (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1977); Barrie Thorne and Nancy Henley (eds.) Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1975); Eleanor E. Maccoby and Carl N. Jacklin, The Psychology of Sex Differences(Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1974). especially Chapter 6; Marianne La France and Clara Mayo, "A Review of Nonverbal Behaviors of Men and Women," Western Journal of Speech Communication,

43(1979), pp. 96-107; John E. Baird, Jr., "Sex Differences in Group Communication: A Review of Relevant Research," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 62(1976), pp. 179-192.

15. For example see Frank Wesley and Claire Wesley, Sex-Role Psychology (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1977), Chapter 3; Hilary M. Lips and Nina L. Colwill, The Psychology of Sex Differences (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1978), Chapter 5; Katharine B. Hoyenga and Kermit T. Hoyenga, The Question of Sex Differences: Psychological, Cultural, and Biological Issues (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1979), Chapter 8.
16. Aletha H. Stein and Margaret M. Bailey, "The Socialization of Achievement Orientation in Females," Psychological Bulletin, 80 (1973), pp. 345-366.
17. Mark L. Knapp, Donald G. Ellis, and Barbara A. Williams, "Perceptions of Communication Behavior Associated with Relationship Terms," Communication Monographs, 47 (1980), pp. 262-278.
18. Paul C. Cozby, "Self-Disclosure: A Literature Review," Psychological Bulletin, 79(1973), pp. 73-91
19. Paul D. Cherulnik, "Sex Differences in the Expression of Emotion in a Structured Social Encounter," Sex Roles, 5 (1979) 413-424.
20. Ralph V. Exline, "Visual Interaction: The Glances of Power and Preference," in James Cole (ed.), Nebraska Symposium

on Motivation, 1971 (Lincoln: University of Nebraka Press, 1971), pp. 163-206.

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23. Stanley Heshka and Yona Nelson, "Interpersonal Speaking Distance as a Function of Age, Sex, and Relationship," Sociometry, 35(1972), pp. 491-498.

24. Ann Frodi, Jacqueline Macaulay, Pauline Ropert Thome, "Are Women Always Less Aggressive Than Men? A Review of the Experimental Literature," Psychological Bulletin, 84(1977), pp. 634-660.

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26. Don H. Zimmerman and Candace West, "Sex Roles, Interruptions and Silences in Conversation," in B. Thorne and N. Henley (eds.) Language and Sex (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1975), pp. 105-129.

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28. Mary Anne Fitzpatrick and Julie Indvik, "The Instrumental and Expressive Domains of Marital Communication," Human Communication Research, 8(1982), pp. 195-213.

29. Myra W. Isenhart, "An Investigation of the Relationship of Sex and Sex Role to the Ability to Decode Nonverbal Cues," Human Communication Research, 6(1980), pp. 309-318; Ross Buck, Robert E. Miller, and William Caul, "Sex, Personality, and Physiological Variables in the Communication of Affect via Facial Expression," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 30(1974), pp. 587-96.

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33. Davitz, pp. 92-105.

34. Joan G. Snodgrass, The Numbers Game: Statistics for Psychology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), Chapter 14.

35. Snodgrass, Chapter 14.

36. Davitz, pp. 121-126.

37. Davitz, Chapter 2.

38. Davitz, Chapter 2.

39. Davitz, pp. 116-119.

40. Inge K. Broverman, Susan R. Vogel, Donald M. Broverman, Frank E. Clarkson, Paul S. Rosenkrantz, "Sex-Role Stereotypes: A Current Appraisal," in Martha Mednick, Sandra Tangri, and Lois Hoffman, Women and Achievement (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1975), pp. 32-47. Also see Eakins and Eakins, Sex Differences in Human Communication, Chapter 1.

41. See footnotes #16-32. While some studies have resulted in no significant differences between the sexes on these socio-emotional variables, whenever differences have been obtained they rather consistently favor females.

42. For example, see Lawrence B. Rosenfeld, "Self-Disclosure Avoidance: Why I am Afraid to Tell You Who I Am," Communication Monographs, 46(1979), pp. 63-74. Also see Eakins and Eakins, Chapter 1.

43. Eakins and Eakins, p. 5. Italics in the original.

44. If the Davitz items (and others) were cast in interval-scale format, and responses factor analyzed, would the obtained dimensions approximate those of the Davitz model of affective experiences? This is a question for future research.

45. Charles E. Osgood, George Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, The Measurement of Meaning, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957).

46. Katriel and Philipsen, p. 315.